

Famous Artists Course for Talented Young People
Famous Artists Schools, Inc., Westport, Connecticut

Section 5 Color in composition

Guiding Faculty

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(1904-1965)

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Color

Imagine — if you can — living in a world of black and white! Black sky, gray grass, drab flowers, the apple the same as the peach. A world without color would be monotonous and dull — our existence would be bleak. Indeed we would quite likely be very different human beings because color is so closely tied in with our emotions. Color contributes to the joy of living — it is part of being alive.

The artist is much more alive than others in this sense; he is *unusually* aware of the colors around him, for color is one of the most important tools he has! You're going to have a really fine time with color — this is perhaps the most exciting of all means of expressing yourself. You've learned that composition can say a lot, that the arrangement of shapes and light and dark patterns can put across your point of view. Using color gives you an even greater chance to tell what you feel, to show your very personal way of "seeing" your subject. And that's what painting is all about, isn't it?

On the following pages you're going to start on a whole new adventure. You'll discover the magic of color relationships, you'll find out how you can make colors work together, helping each other to create a sense of space, or of depth, or movement. We told you earlier that you'd never be quite the same after learning to look at the world with an artist's eye. Now you'll notice color in some of the most unlikely places — discarded along the highway, growing in the woods, even in your own kitchen. You'll be delighted with harmonies you've passed by before — harmonies which you can mix on your palette and use in your painting.

You'll learn more about yourself, too, for your tastes and responses to color are very personal. You're probably quite sure of your favorite color, but you may not have thought much about your reactions to other colors or color combinations. What do you feel about bright purple, or greenish yellow? If you think about your reactions to colors you'll realize how closely they are connected with your emotions. Everyone reacts to color and that's why it can be so effective in communicating your feelings. The more you paint, the more you'll be aware of how you feel *inside* about your subject, for, like all artists, your own emotions will become involved in what you're painting and you'll consciously use the colors that tell best what you feel.

Try to develop a special "antenna" of your own, so, with senses sharpened, you'll be conscious of just how colors do affect you, and so you'll realize, too, how colors affect each other. For instance, have you ever picked up a shell at the beach that had beautiful colors, you thought — or have you come upon an especially colorful stone which you've taken home? Surprisingly, when placed on a white tabletop or shelf, the shell's color seems pale and uninteresting; the stone appears quite ordinary. Their colors were affected by the colors around them — at the beach or in the woods, and in your house. Discovering what happens when one color is placed next to another is often most surprising, you'll see!

In this section you're going to be working with new color ideas and experiments which will help you understand how color works, but the most important thing is for you to apply what you learn to your own work in your own way. Whatever direction you take as a painter, color will remain one of the most important, most personal, most exciting ingredients.



Color characteristics

When you learned to belt a baseball or to make a cake you first had to know a few basic principles — how to grip the bat and take a stance or how to correctly measure and mix ingredients before baking. To paint, to use color with skill, you also need to learn basic principles — to become familiar with the three characteristics of color: hue, value and intensity. Study the colored numerals carefully and remember that, like batting a ball or baking well, the ability to use color comes by putting the principles to work, experimenting again and again.

Hue

The word *hue* is the term used to name a color. As people have names — Jack, Jane, Ed, Polly — colors have hues: purple, yellow, orange, red, pink, blue. You can see these particular hues to the left. Every color that you can think of has a hue — that is, has a name.



Green —
bright, intense

Green — same value,
but duller,
less intense

Green — still
same value,
but even duller

Blue

Blue —
lighter in value

Still blue —
but even lighter in value

Value

The *value* of a color is its lightness or darkness. The example above shows the same blue in values ranging from dark to light. We discussed values in Section 3, so you know that if a color is light we say its value is high, or high key. A dark color is of low value or low key. Even the very dark triangle above is actually the same blue but of extremely low value.

Intensity

The *intensity* of a color is its brightness or dullness. The bands in the figure 3 are of the same value but different intensities. The top band is a bright green, an intense color. See how the greenness diminishes in the lower bands — the color is duller, more gray, less intense.



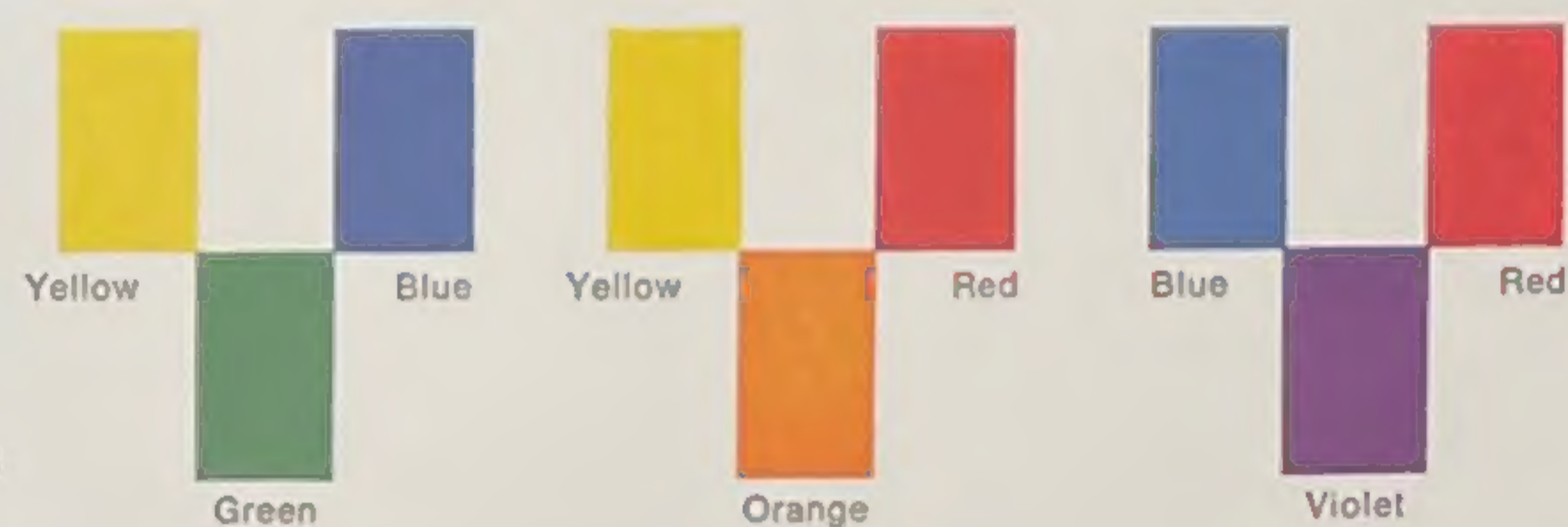
Hue: The artist used different hues for the trees and the sky in this picture — yellow tree, blue sky — green tree, orange sky.



Value: Here are two paintings using the same colors but different values. The high-key painting at the top seems more cheerful than the low-key painting beneath. Values can help create moods.



Intensity: These two parrots have feathers of the same hue but the large bird is painted with more intense colors. Notice that the brighter colors seem to come forward, the duller stay back.



Secondary colors

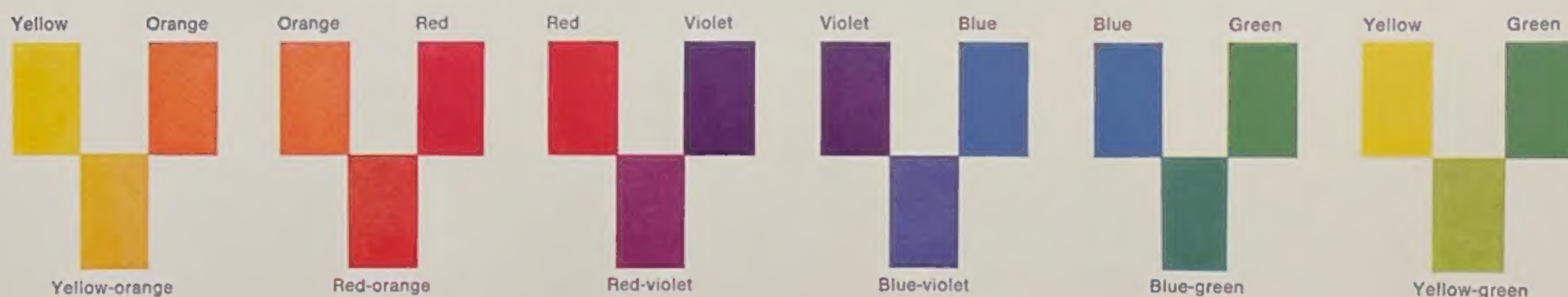
The color wheel

The circle of colors commonly called a color wheel has long been used in painters' studios and classrooms to show how hues are related in the world of art. We've sliced out of our color wheel the *primary* colors — red, blue and yellow. You probably learned at school that these three pure hues cannot be made by mixing, and learned also that all other colors are made from these three. When you mix any two of these three colors together you create *secondary* colors. You can make more colors by mixing the secondaries together or mixing them with the primaries.

Two other terms that will be useful when you're working with color are *analogous* and *complementary*. Analogous colors are those which are next to each other on the color wheel. Complementary colors are those that are directly opposite each other on the wheel. You'll find all the information on this page very helpful, so refer to it whenever you experiment with color.

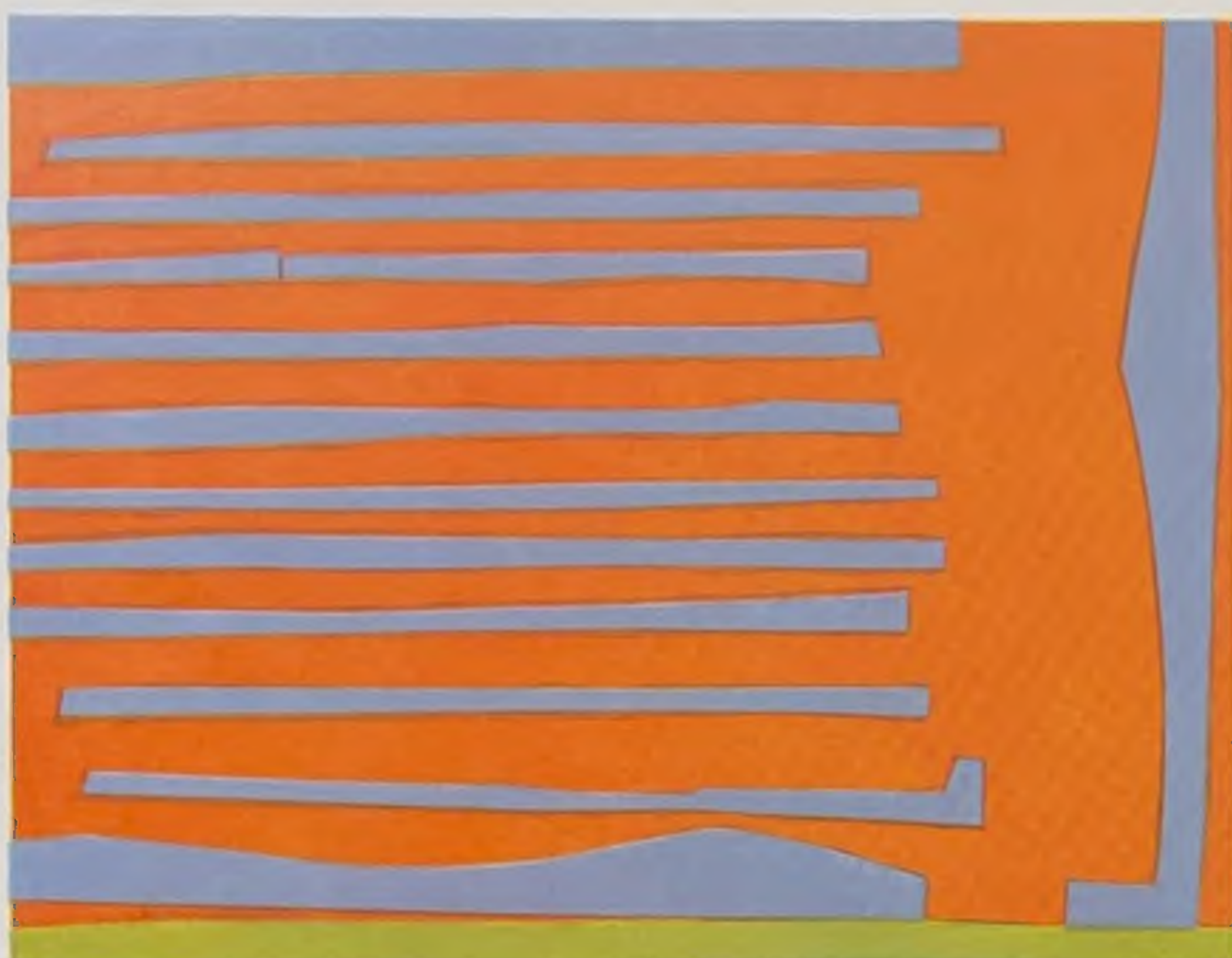


Mixing primary and secondary colors





Three colors have been arranged in this design so that there is an overall impression of green. The blue and orange shapes serve as accents that add interest to the tranquil arrangement. A much more active, even busy, feeling has been created in the designs below by just changing the sizes, shapes and placement of the very same colors.



In the design above, the parallel orange and blue strips are related so that they seem to vibrate and fight for attention. Below, a nearly equal balance of blue, orange and green creates quite another effect. The blue and orange don't vibrate as much because their shapes are less regular and the arrangement is more varied. The additional areas of green also reduce the vibration.



Colors influence each other

Color is like music in some ways. Separate musical notes do not mean much alone, but when they're placed in a special relationship to each other, a melody results. Colors also can be arranged to create an overall feeling — a melody of colors. The same musical notes placed in a different position can produce a new tune; a shift in the *shape, amount* and *placement* of color can create a completely new feeling. Just look at what happens in the designs at the left. Three very different color ideas have been created by changing the relationship of the same orange, blue and green. Use your Color-aid paper now and see what overall effects, what kind of "melodies," you can compose by rearranging and changing the sizes and shapes of any three colors you choose.



The two deer and the inner squares above are painted with the same red, but the red against dark green seems to be lighter than the red against a yellow background. The fir trees below (and the inner squares) appear to be different in hue, value and intensity but they are really the same green.





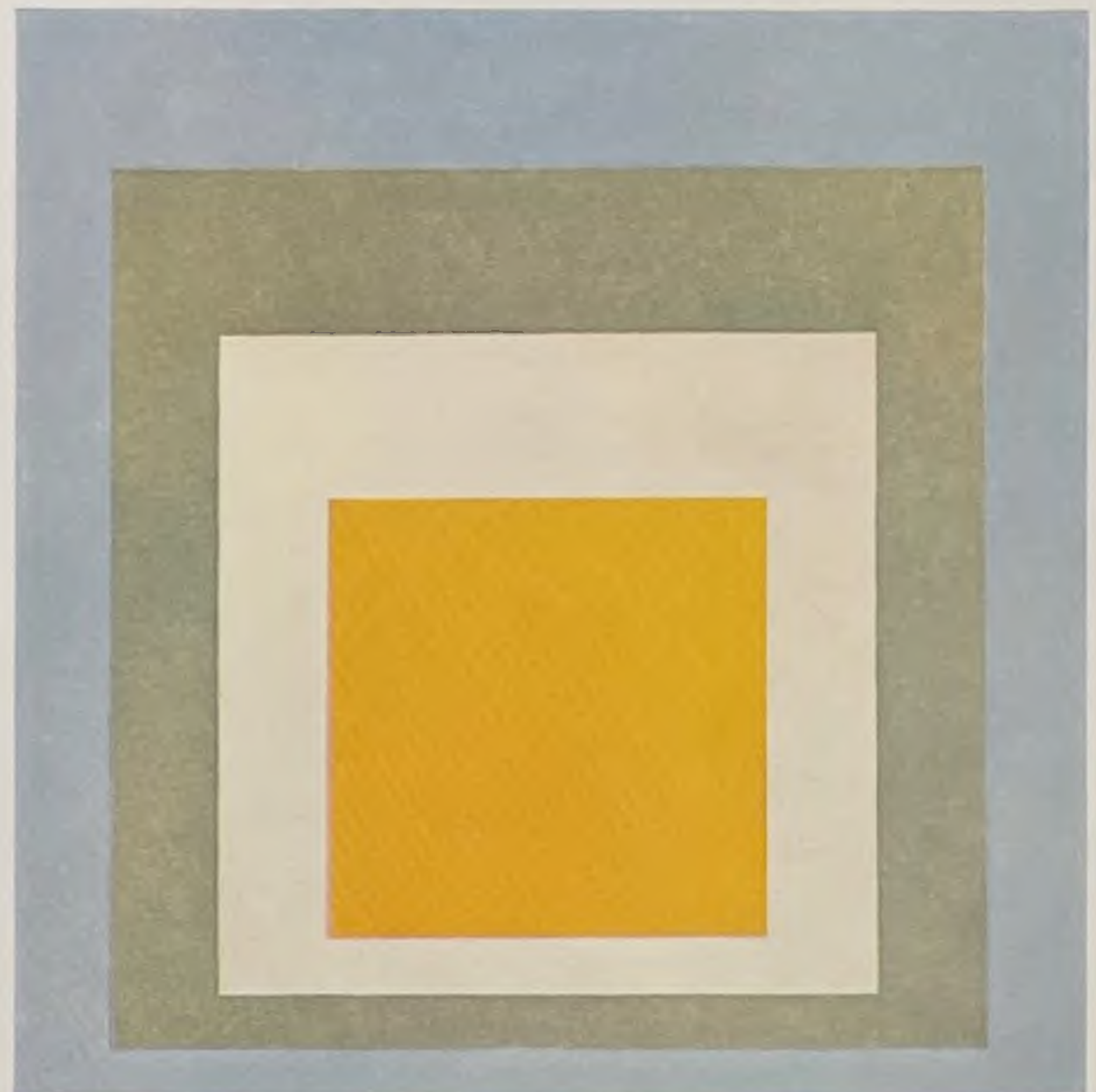
Harold Von Schmidt's gray-blue background hills in this painting seem very distant in contrast to the brighter, red-orange lead horses. The yellow plain stretching toward us in the foreground gives an added feeling of space and depth.

"Reps" to the Roundup

Three artists use color

Artists use their knowledge of the way colors influence each other in many ways. Look at the realistic Western scene, the stark contemporary work and the Impressionist painting on this page. See how color relationships work further magic here — they give a feeling of depth, of distance, on what is really a flat surface. Warm colors — red, orange and yellow — seem to come forward, whereas the cooler green, blue and purple hues tend to recede, to move back, giving another dimension to the paintings. It's a fine idea to look at good paintings whenever you have a chance, to see how artists use color to show what *their* trained eyes find in nature.

Josef Albers' *Homage to the Square: "Ascending"* certainly seems at first glance to be a simple arrangement on a flat surface. A longer look shows that the yellow square seems to recede, then floats out. Stare a little harder at this fascinating painting and you'll also find that some of the other colors seem to come forward and move back.



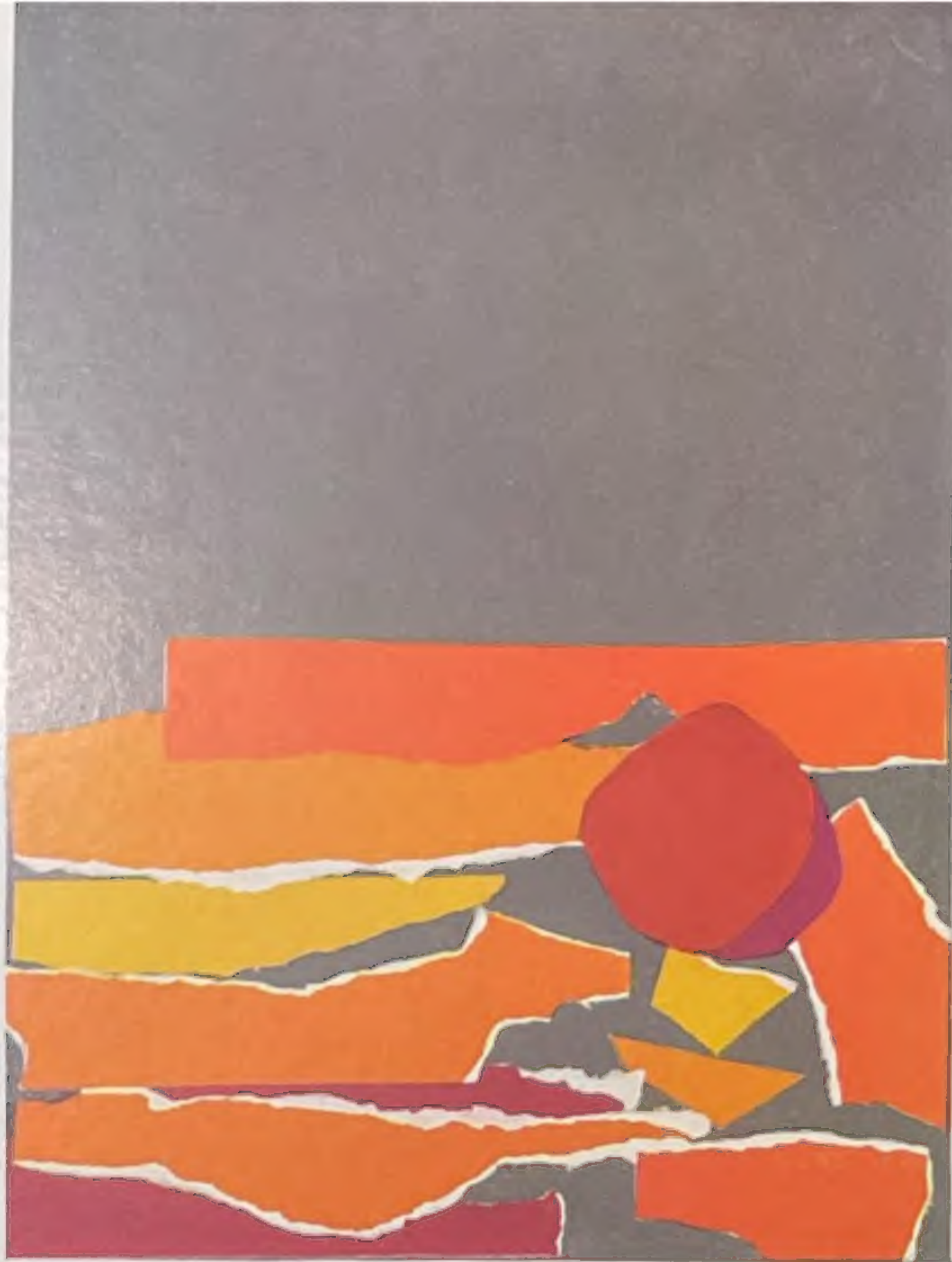
Collection Whitney Museum of American Art, New York



Museum of Art, Rhode Island School of Design, Providence



Claude Monet's world here in *Le Bassin d'Argenteuil* is bright and luminous. He has caught on canvas what his eye saw in brilliant sunlight — colors shimmer and outlines are blurred. Monet, and other Impressionist painters, achieved this effect by using a "broken color" technique. Look at the enlarged segment above (taken from the foreground), which shows how he daubed spots of color that are actually combined in the eye of the viewer when seen from a slight distance.



These bright colors are made even brighter when they are placed against a dark, neutral gray background.



Notice the impact created by the imaginative use of color on a familiar symbol.



Analogous harmony helps to hold together these very active shapes.

Exploring color

Now let's experiment with color harmonies to find out what shapes, colors and color combinations interest you most and how they can help you make better, more expressive pictures. Use your Color-aid paper and any other colored paper you come across—magazine pages, wallpaper samples, or gift wrapping. Cut or tear various shapes, try different combinations. Shift the color pieces around, changing the shapes and proportions until you arrive at designs that seem pleasing to you—then paste the pieces in place. Try many of them!

The designs on this page were made by students your own age. Notice that the almost lightning-like streak across a harmony of strong hues (*below*) creates a very different color effect than the overlapping circles of blue. You can see that color harmonies and the choice of shapes are very personal. Your feelings about color are unique and individual, too. Let your color choices reflect *you*.

All designs on this page were done by students of the Famous Artists Course for Talented Young People.



Different values of just one color can be used to make a pleasing design.



In this bold set of relationships, which of the two large areas of color seems to be closer to you?



Here's another way to discover harmonies. Cover a whole sheet of watercolor paper with wet-in-wet washes made up of any color combination you wish. Take a clue from our examples and don't use too many colors at once. After the sheet is dry, cut it into circles or other shapes and notice the interesting color harmonies you have created.

Color effects in your pictures

The landscape below offers a fine chance to experiment further with color. Follow these steps to *make a stencil* based on this scene: (1) Trace the design on visualizing paper. (2) Using your tracing, transfer the yellow hill onto a piece of yellow Color-aid paper by going over the outline, pressing hard enough with your pencil to indent the paper underneath. (3) Do the same with the black, purple and blue shapes. (4) Cut, then paste, the shapes in position on a sheet of paper. (5) Finally, place your tracing over your landscape,

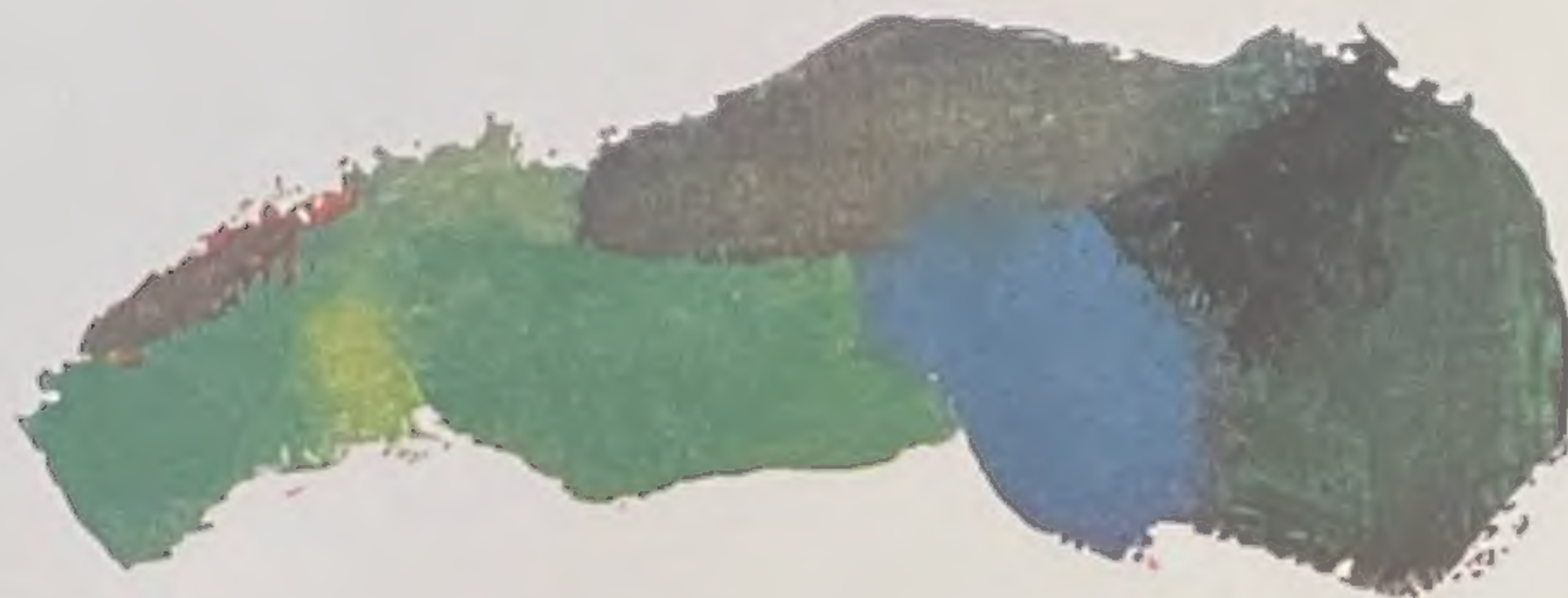
transfer all the white shapes and cut them out with a sharp razor blade. Your picture should look exactly like the one below, except the white shapes will be completely cut out in your design.

Slide full sheets of Color-aid paper, one at a time, under your stencil so that all of the openings are the same color. Then try other colors, letting more than one color show through. Note that the overall mood or effect changes with every color change.



Finding color harmonies in nature

As your sensitivity to color grows, you will find that nature is one of your greatest teachers. The miracle of unending colors, the phenomenon of shifting light *always* await your attention—and your response! When you look out of your window or walk down the street—at any season, at any time of day—you can find color harmonies that will stir you. Make lots of color studies in oil or watercolor—small abstract swatches or simple sketches like the ones on these pages. Keep your mind and your heart open to subtle as well as brilliant hues. Sunlight filtering through the leaves of a city tree and bouncing against an apartment building, the steam rising from lawns and misting over a garden after a summer shower—try to capture such modest moments as well as nature's more dramatic displays.



What does green mean to you? Deep woods provide a rich and varied palette of greens ranging from yellow-green to almost black. Stroll across your own backyard or walk through a park at summer's peak and see how many greens you can find—and think about what colors you'd use to paint them.



Some of the most vivid color in nature can be found in a sunset. The sky at this time of day may be intense orange, red or violet or any combination of these hues, depending on weather conditions and on geography, too. Try to duplicate patches of the brilliant colors, then paint a small sketch of the sunset where you live.



The most solid-seeming forms take on new aspects on a foggy day, when outlines are hazy and harmony is muted. Even when a wide variety of hues is present—blues, yellows, violets, greens—they blend together in the mist. Notice the subtle colors in the world about you when the atmosphere is softened by the weather.





The cold light of winter brings out line and color in nature. Look carefully—snow is not always a blanket of pure white, sometimes you'll see beautiful harmonies of blues and violets. The contrasting dark gray and brown of bare branches add to nature's chilly palette.



Autumn in some areas is a season of breathtaking color—brilliant reds, golds, olive greens and browns. Artists can seldom resist these bold hues. In this painting a harmony of yellow and yellow-gold dominates. The contrasting crimson leaves, patches of blue sky and brown tree trunks provide lively accents.



(Right) Oak leaves, ragged and holey, placed against an orange, bright yellow and brown background, become a 'fascinating study of shape and color.' See what you can do with just a few leaves and colored paper! Below: Leaves with clearly defined veins have been arranged to make an attractive design.



A collage made of different materials—leather, provide a the colors and textures in the collage. See how many colors and textures you can find! Collecting different examples of the same color you can use to build to collect many kinds of textures. You can use paper, stones or metals, even the paper, stones, and textures.



A closer look

You've just seen some of the many color harmonies in nature that are all around you. Now let's take an even closer look. We want you to be alert to the wide range of color in "found objects"—in a gnarled root, in a stray feather, in a pinecone or a mica-flecked stone. Notice, too, the variety of color you come upon in man-made objects—in discarded plastic, broken bricks, glass or maybe in a scrap of metal. Many artists habitually collect objects whose color or shape pleases them—they have developed a special awareness, a wide-eyed way of seeing the small wonders of the world. Picasso is perhaps the best-known collector of this kind; some of his "found objects" have even made their way into museums as art. Try to build up your own gallery of found objects—not much more than imagination is needed to transform many of these finds into art.





There are creative possibilities in the commonplace, even in such everyday objects as kitchen sponges. The pastel design here is made entirely of pieces of cut sponge. Notice the arrangement of the different textures and colors as well as the varying depth of the small pieces. Be conscious of color in familiar objects—a little inventiveness can turn something ordinary into something special

This spectacular composition was made of a broken ashtray, a large piece of mirror, scraps of plastic and fragments of automobile taillights from a used-car dump. The brightly colored pieces were cemented together with permanent glue. The photograph here is almost actual size, showing the texture and sparkle of the overlapping glass and plastic. Suspending the arrangement from a length of wire or chain could turn it into a dazzling hanging sculpture. You can create a simple sculpture or an imaginative mobile with found objects—why not collect colorful things with this project in mind?



Here's a piece of junk just as it was found—weathered, corroded, shaped by time into a piece that needs nothing added to make it visually interesting. Study the colors which time and the elements have unified and softened into a pleasing patina. Can you mix such weather-worn hues? Can you use them in a painting? Keep an eye out for things like this, things which you may have passed by before!





Nature presents the same colors to all artists—but it's up to you to use nature as a springboard—to look for and use, exaggerate and emphasize, the colors that most clearly communicate your feelings and reactions. Let's look at what you might find in a typical winter scene—a generous blanket of snow, scattered skaters, a tangle of branches and limbs. Which shapes are important to you and what colors would you use to best show how you feel about this landscape?



There's no question about this snappy winter's day. The muted blues and the angular shapes express the coldness the artist wanted to convey. The tracery of bare tree limbs and the busy figures add to the brisk atmosphere.

Interpreting nature's colors

An artist seldom paints a scene exactly as it is—his aim is not to paint what a camera can catch! He's more concerned with presenting his own personal reality. Look at the photograph above and then study the paintings on these pages which show several different ways an artist responded to this wintry scene. You learned in Section 4 how to look beyond the obvious, how to be selective in finding compositions which interest you most. You have this same freedom to see and to use whatever colors you wish—to show as well as you can with color just how you feel about what you see. In the painting on the opposite page, the artist chose to concentrate on a small group of figures and he brightened the colors to emphasize the clear, cold mood of the midwinter day. The other examples here show different reactions to the same scene ranging from gaiety to gloom! How would you interpret this landscape?

The painting below is a very inventive departure from the actual scene. Here the artist was interested in conveying the somber mood many people associate with winter. His highly personal use of dark and mysterious colors and stylized drawing helps us share this feeling.



Gay winter costumes, flickering in bright sunlight, caught the artist's eye in the picture at left. The glittering play of light on the active skaters is his main concern and the figures in the foreground reflect a sunny radiance, too.



Forest of Arden, Albert P. Ryder
The Metropolitan Museum of Art
Bequest of Stephen C. Clark, 1960

Color and emotion

"A work of art which did not originate from emotions is not art," Cézanne wrote. A good painter always puts some of himself into his pictures—he gives attention to how he really feels about a subject and uses color to express his emotions. Remember, it's not *what* you see that's important but *how*. Your emotions, your responses to the world are what make you unique—and your paintings will reflect this individuality.

Look at the paintings here to see how some well-known

artists used color. In each one the artist reveals to us something about his mood and feelings through his choice of colors. The next time your emotions are stirred—no matter what they are—try putting them down in color. Does blue-green say sadness or does red-violet? Or how about a murky gray? Follow your instincts. Express in color a feeling of happiness or anger; experiment and discover what colors best convey various emotions. Use color to show how *you* feel inside.

Three color moods

Albert Ryder, a leading American painter who lived from 1847 to 1917 was a genius at using color to create an almost eerie, golden light in otherwise rather somber paintings. The picture on the opposite page shows this ability well. Ryder was an imaginative creator, basing his paintings on literature and opera. He painted during a period when natural color and sunlight were in style but he didn't go along with the popular trend—he stayed true to his own feelings. "If I am to do anything I must paint my own experience my own way," Ryder said, and he did.

Mary Cassatt used a quite different harmony of colors to express how truly touched she was by the tenderness of the mother and child at right. She painted many "mother and child" pictures. The gentle colors and the soft flowing lines in her compositions create beautiful realistic studies of motherhood. Mary Cassatt is still considered America's foremost woman painter, although she lived most of her long life in France.

The "Fauves" or "Wild Beasts" were a group of painters whose work startled the art world in the very early 1900's. These artists painted with wildly brilliant colors, using thick, forceful brushstrokes. The picture below, by one of the leading Fauve painters, Maurice Vlaminck, tells us that this man was a vibrant human being and something of a rebel. You can feel that he was almost "intoxicated with color" when he painted *Tugboat at Chatou*.



Mother and Child
Wichita Art Museum, Roland P. Murdock Collection

From the Collection of Mr. and Mrs. John Hay Whitney



Gallery

Paintings by some of our Faculty

The pictures here show how carefully chosen colors can make you see and react just as the artist wants you to. Having decided on the theme or picture idea, each artist gave great consideration to which colors could best express it. Study these paintings to find out how well-chosen color can emphasize the feeling or thought you are trying to convey.

Painting by Doris Lee for *Life* magazine, © Time, Inc.



Doris Lee used warm, dusty browns in painting *Snake Charmer*, all colors which tell of the dryness and heat of the North African locale where these musicians and the snake performed.

Red Stairway
City Art Museum of Saint Louis



In this powerful painting by Ben Shahn, see how the single jarring red note of the staircase against the cold gray-blues attracts your eye instantly—and repeatedly, creating a disturbing mood.

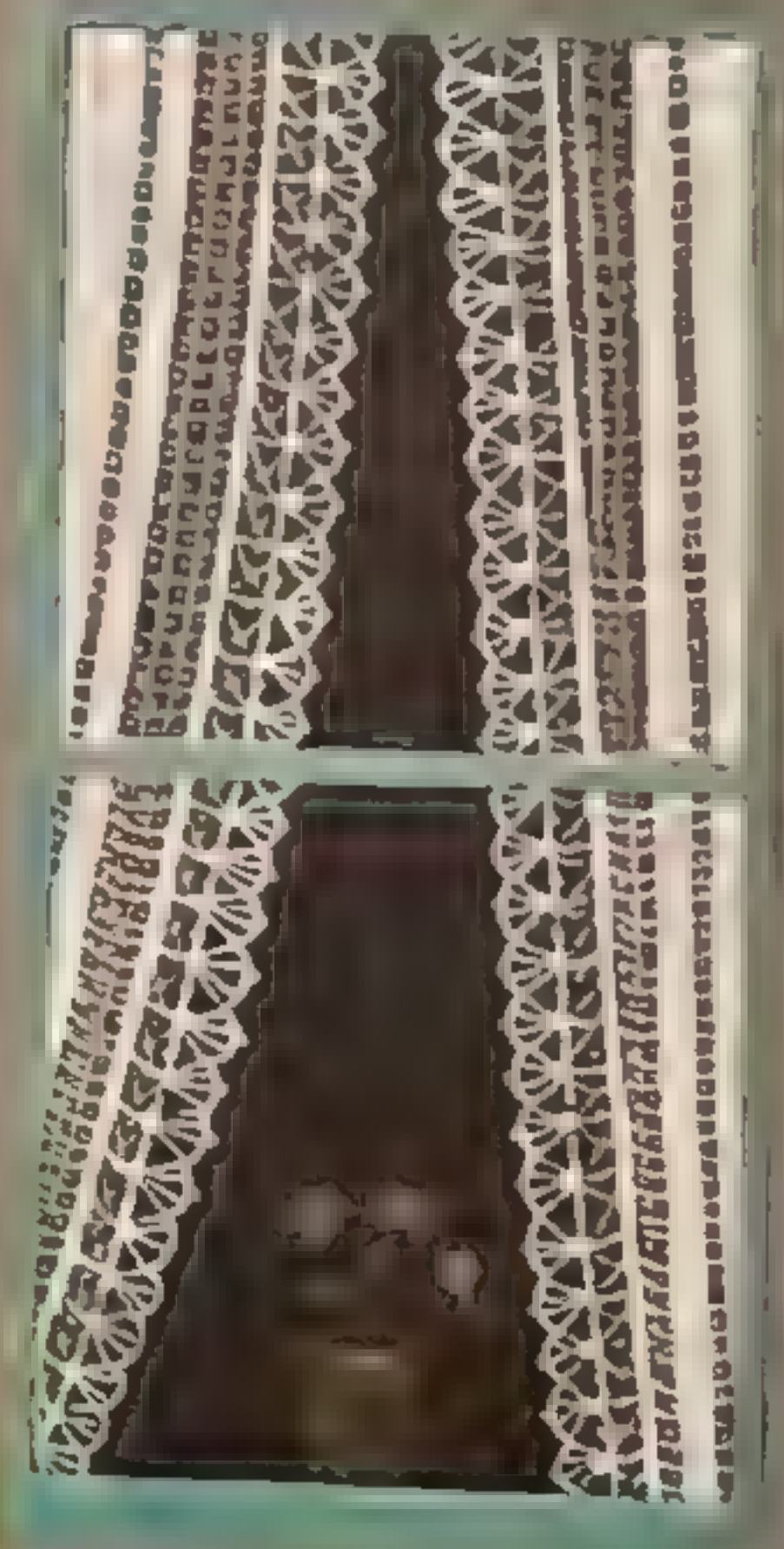


New Snow
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, George A. Hearn Fund, 1943

Ernest Fiene used white and a limited number of gray muted colors effectively to give a bleak, cold feeling to this winter day. The snow seems to have just fallen; its whiteness is emphasized by the dark gray sky.

Courtesy, Abbott Laboratories

You'll recognize Doris Lee's style again—her colors are close in value, her figures have an innocent charm. The blues and greens in *Summer Idyll* make you feel that this is a cool summer scene. (Had she painted with warm greens and yellows you might have sensed a hot day.)





The pigments you use

So far, we've been talking about color only in terms of the hues of the color wheel — that is, red, yellow, blue, orange, green, etc. The tubes of color you'll be buying in art stores, however, are not labeled like the colors in the wheel but are identified by the pigments used to make them. Pigments are finely ground colored substances — mainly earths and clays, minerals or chemicals which, when mixed with a binder such as oil or gum arabic, make oil paints, watercolors, poster paints and other mediums. Many pigments, such as cadmium yellow, cadmium red, cobalt blue, yellow ochre, are named for the minerals or earths from which they're made. Others are named for their appearance — ultramarine blue or cerulean blue, for example.

We've arranged some of the most common and useful pigments around the color wheel to show you how they're related to the hues in the circle. You can see from its position

here that burnt sienna is orange in hue, though it is much darker and less intense than the pure orange in the color wheel. Ultramarine blue has much more violet in it than cerulean blue. The samples here are oil paints but the same terms are used for watercolors.

Knowing the true hue of each pigment is very helpful, especially when you are using very dark colors in a painting. For instance, if you were trying for a cool effect in a picture, you might mistakenly use burnt sienna or burnt umber for dark accents — but, by checking the chart above, you can see that the basic hue of both of these colors is a warm yellow-orange. A cool dark pigment such as viridian or ultramarine blue would be better. Here's a helpful tip for you to remember — you can easily recognize the true hue of any dark pigment if you mix a small amount of white with oil paints, or a little water with watercolors.



Here's how to set up your palette. Notice that the warm colors are laid out along the top edge, the cool colors along the side. Many artists find this grouping most efficient for mixing their colors as they paint. White is usually placed at the top left corner between the warm and cool colors. Your palette should include some new pigments now, in addition to those you already have, so you'll be able to mix almost any color you'll need. The recommended colors, reading clockwise, are

Ivory black
Cerulean blue
Viridian green
Titanium white
Cadmium yellow pale
Yellow ochre
Cadmium red
Alizarin crimson

You can use the small palette cups for turpentine or, as many artists do, use a large clean glass jar or discarded coffee can.

Your palette

You already know that a palette is a mixing surface, but this term also applies to the range of colors used by an individual artist. Some artists' work can be identified by their continued use of the same hues. As you progress you, too, may tend to frequently use a specific combination of colors — this is *your* personal palette.

How to lay out your oil palette

It is quite likely that eventually you'll find yourself using more of one color than another, but at first try squeezing an equal amount of each color and a very generous amount of white on your palette. Use your brush or palette knife to pick up small amounts of the paints you want to mix and blend them in the center of the palette with the brush or knife. When you've finished painting, remember to clean this area carefully, leaving the colors around the edge, of course. Scrape

the center with a palette knife, then wipe with rags and turpentine. Use turpentine to clean your brushes, too.

How to lay out your watercolor palette

Below, we show you a watercolor palette that is efficient and complete. You can achieve any effect you want with these pigments. In squeezing your watercolors on the palette, place them far enough apart so they won't run into each other. Use the center of the palette as your mixing area. When you mix watercolor, mix more than you think you'll need, just to be sure you have enough. If you don't mix quite enough your painting will dry while you're trying to mix more of the same color. Watercolor looks different wet than it does dry, so it's difficult to judge the true mixed color on your palette. Many artists keep extra watercolor paper handy to try their mixtures on first. After you've painted, clean the mixing area with a wet cloth and wash your brushes thoroughly with water.

There are many styles of watercolor palettes available but a simple white porcelain-coated butcher's tray makes an ideal mixing surface. Arrange your pigments like this — reading clockwise they are:

Cadmium yellow pale
Raw sienna
Cadmium red light
Alizarin crimson
Burnt sienna
Raw umber
Hooker's green deep
Thalo green
Thalo blue
Cerulean blue
Payne's gray
Ivory black



Mixing colors

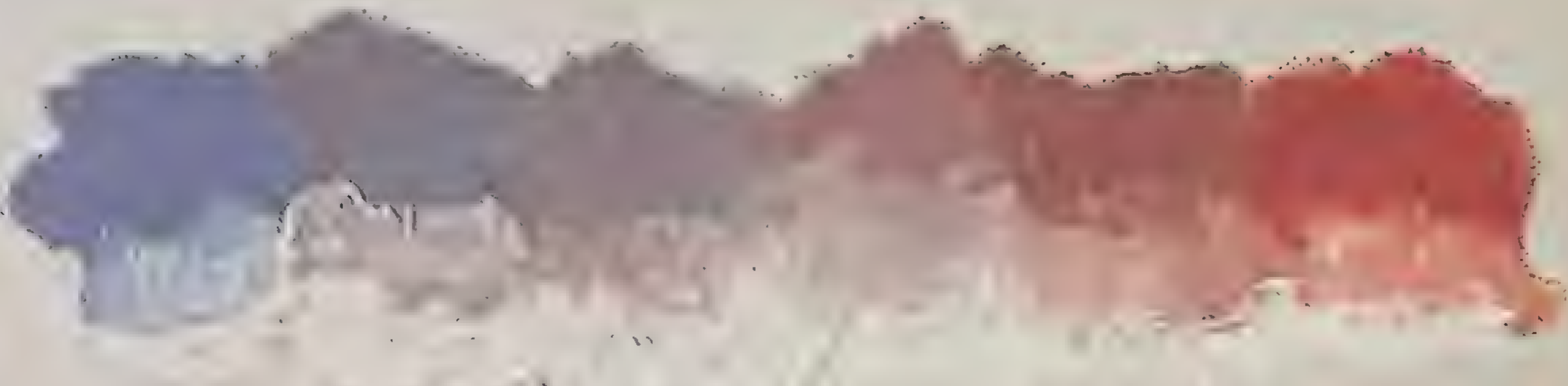
There will be very few times that a color right from the tube will be exactly the one you want. Most of the colors you'll paint with will be your own creation, colors you've mixed yourself. The best way to learn about mixing is to do it. Get out your oil paints and some Canvaskin, or a shirt cardboard or even heavy paper. Study the colors and tints shown in the examples below and try mixing them yourself. Then, try combinations of your own. Remember to keep your mixtures simple — use only two or three colors. (If you add too many colors to a mixture the result is apt to be dull and muddy.)

Note

Oil paints were used for the mixtures on these pages; watercolors in the same combinations produce similar results. To lighten your watercolor mixtures, use water instead of white paint.



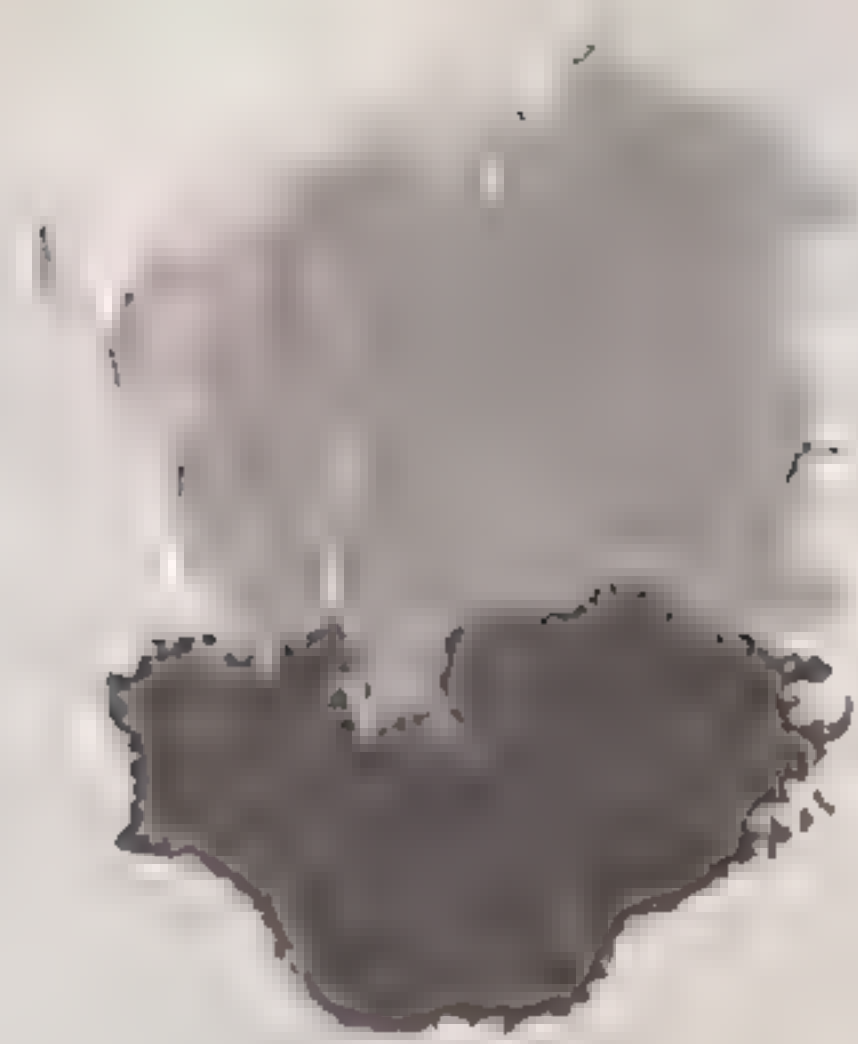
By mixing cadmium yellow, at the left, with cerulean blue, at the right, we produce these green tones — green, yellow-green and blue-green. Beneath these pure colors are the tints made by adding white.



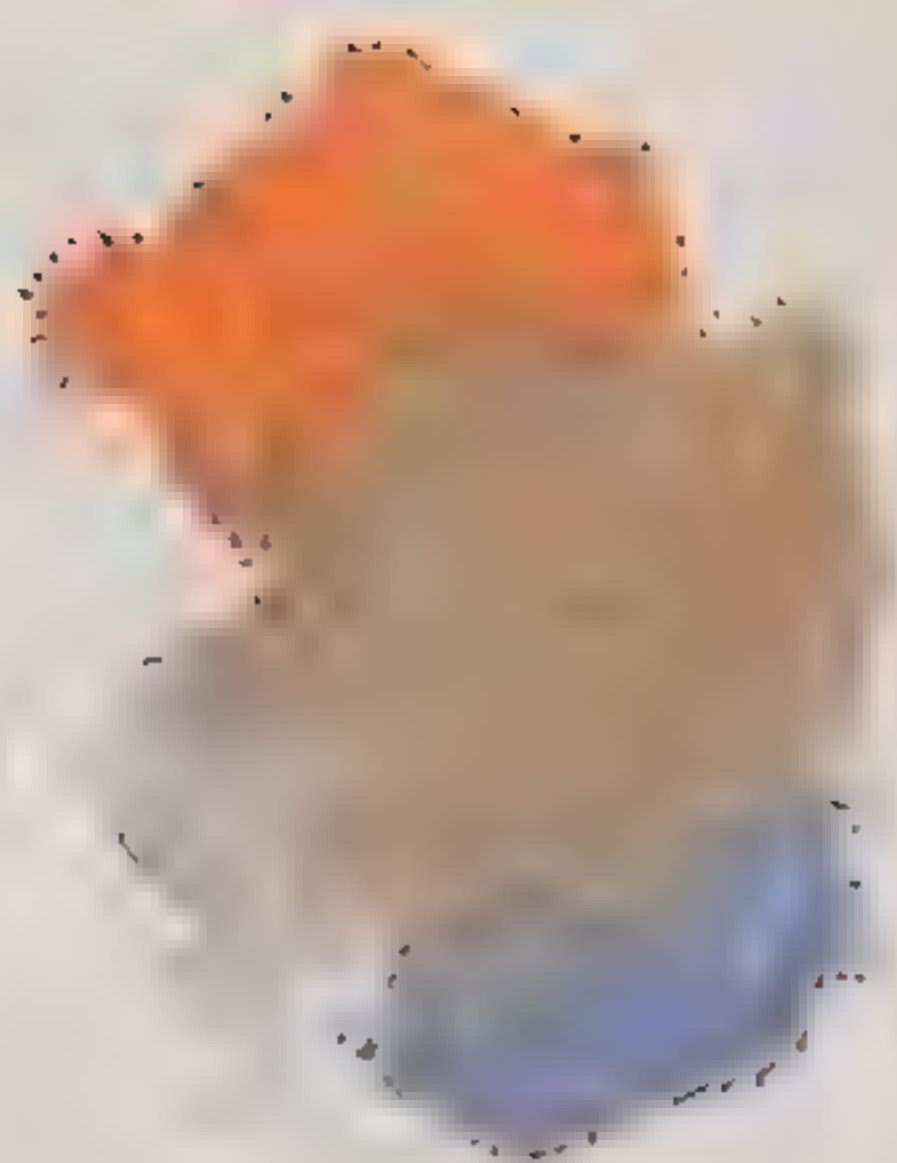
Here are combinations of cerulean blue and cadmium red. They make violet, blue-violet and red-violet. The cooling effect of white on these colors is particularly noticeable in the tints.



This mixture shows a combination of red, yellow, and blue, plus white and black. Notice that the black darkens the value of everything mixed with it, and also creates grays. The mixture above gives you an idea of the wide variety of colors that you can make with just a few pigments, plus black and white.



Titanium white and ivory black made this gray — the only true neutral gray on the page.



Cadmium orange and its complement, cerulean blue, give us this lively grayish violet. Some white, of course, is used in all these mixtures



A warm yellowish gray can be made from a violet plus cadmium yellow (pale) and white.



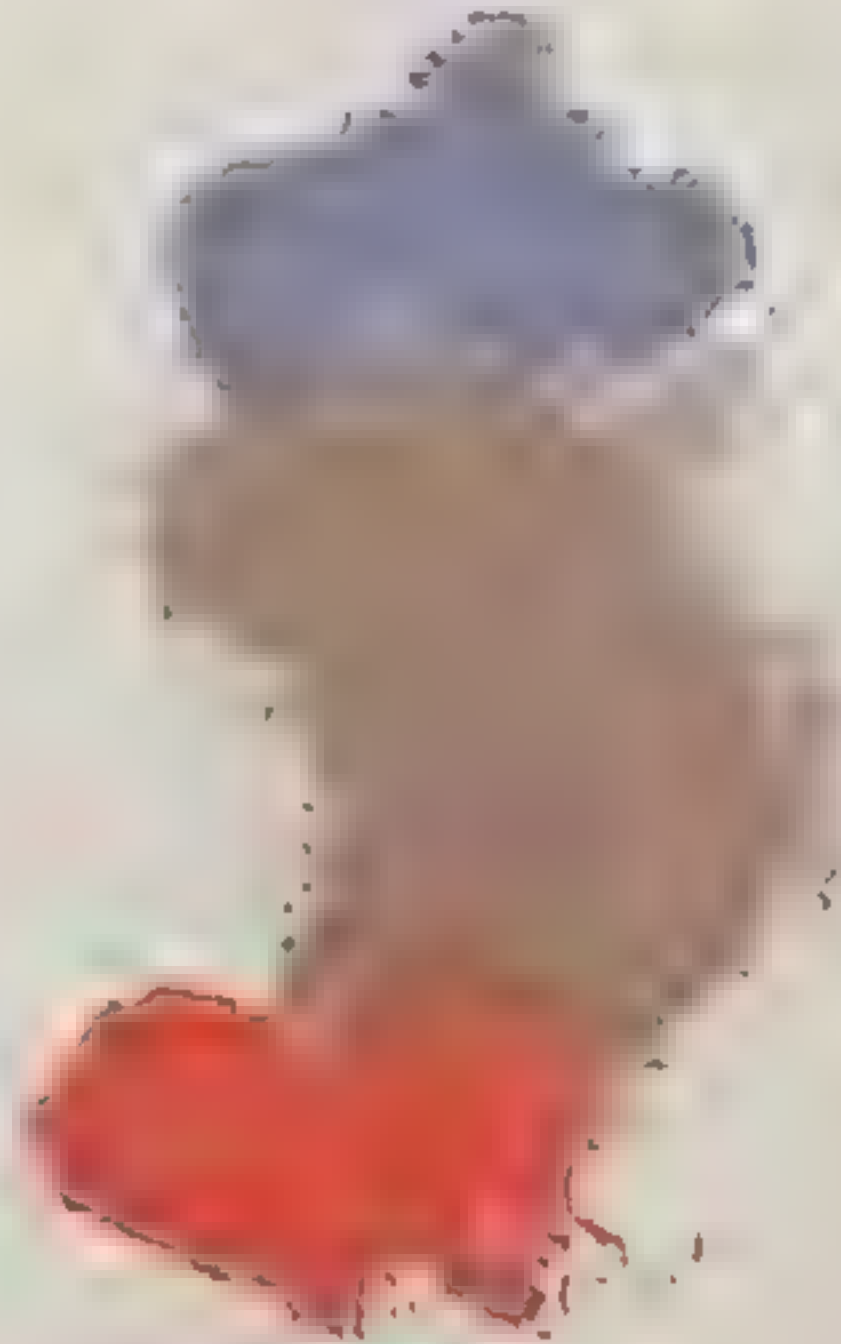
This gray is from a mixture of cadmium red (light) and viridian plus white. It is quite neutral.



This cool green-gray results from a combination of cerulean blue, yellow ochre and white.



Burnt sienna, mixed with viridian and white, produces a rich, warm brownish gray.



The result of a mixture of cadmium red (light), cerulean blue and white is this violet gray.



An extremely cool blue-gray can be made from alizarin crimson, viridian and white.



These four mixtures are all made with cerulean blue, yellow ochre and white. They differ only in the proportions of color that have been blended together. Mixture 1 is a light, warm grayish yellow. Mixture 2 is especially warm because an extra



amount of ochre is used. Mixture 3 is so balanced that it is nearly neutral, while mixture 4 is a darker, cooler blue-gray. Study all the combinations on this page carefully and practice mixing them.



Mixing grays

Some of the most beautiful colors can be called "grays" — just look at the grays above and you'll see that some of them actually suggest soft sunlight rather than shadow. Grays and grayish colors are such an important part of your palette you'll want to know how to mix a variety of them. (Almost any subject you paint will require muted colors as well as intense ones.) Grays can be made in two ways: from black and white, or from complementary colors and white. Explore different ways of mixing grays, beginning, as we have, with black and white. Then try mixing complementary shades and white — vary the proportions and see what grayish colors you get.

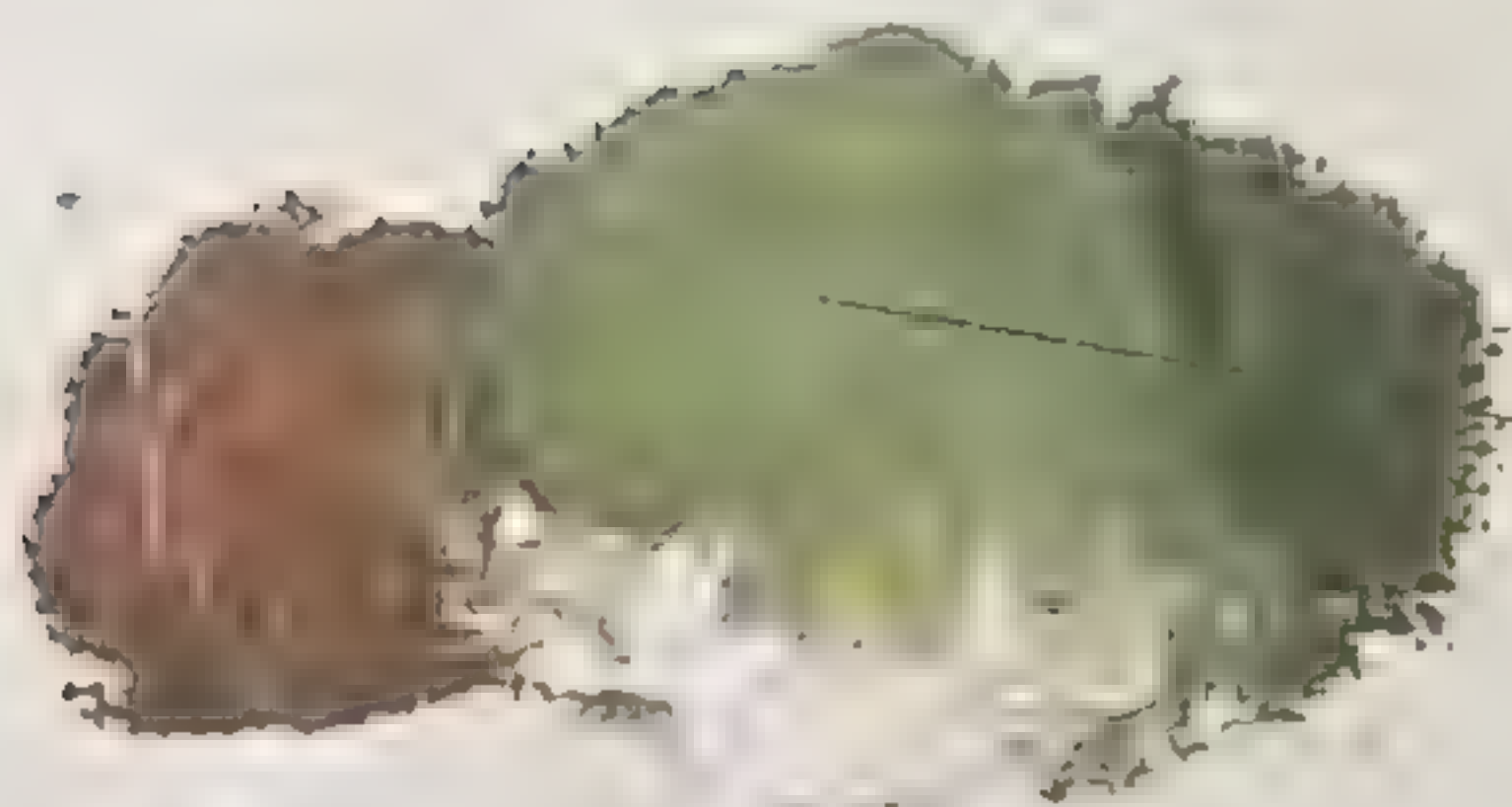


Painting a still life in color

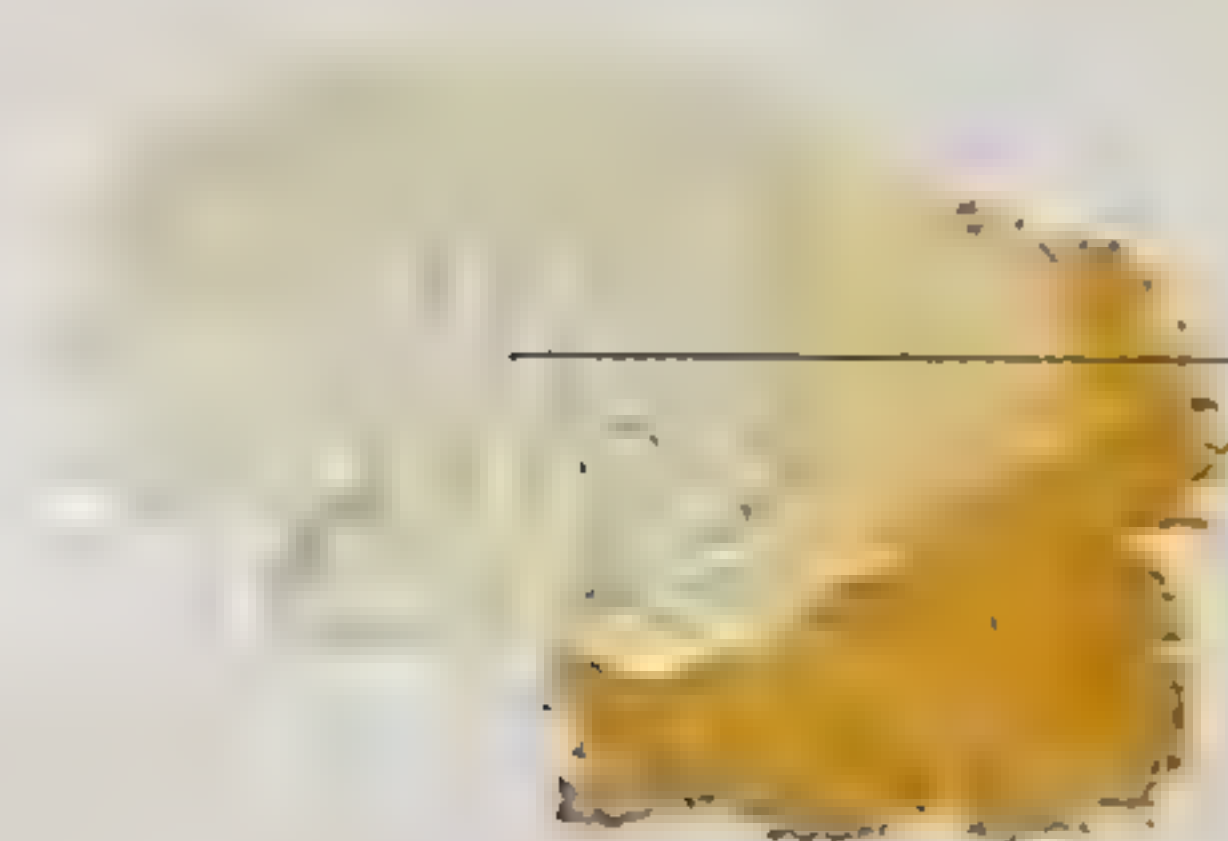


You'll find the same satisfaction in painting a still life today that generations of artists have discovered before you. A still-life subject offers a wonderful way for you to study color and other facets of picture-making at your leisure — your subject is easily available and, once set up, remains the same. Look over our shoulder here to follow the procedure, step by step, from our small color sketch to the finished painting. Keep in mind, as you "watch" us here, that the whole process applies to a still life of your own

One of the most important steps of all must be taken *before* you begin any picture. This is when you design your composition and decide which pigments you'll mix to make the colors and values you want to use. We made a rough color sketch, mixing the basic colors of our objects. The bottle is dark green, the drape is pink, the tablecloth is white. There are varieties of color in each object, of course, and we'll look for them when we start to paint, but we won't forget the basic color and value plan we decided on at this point



Burnt sienna, viridian and white



White and yellow ochre

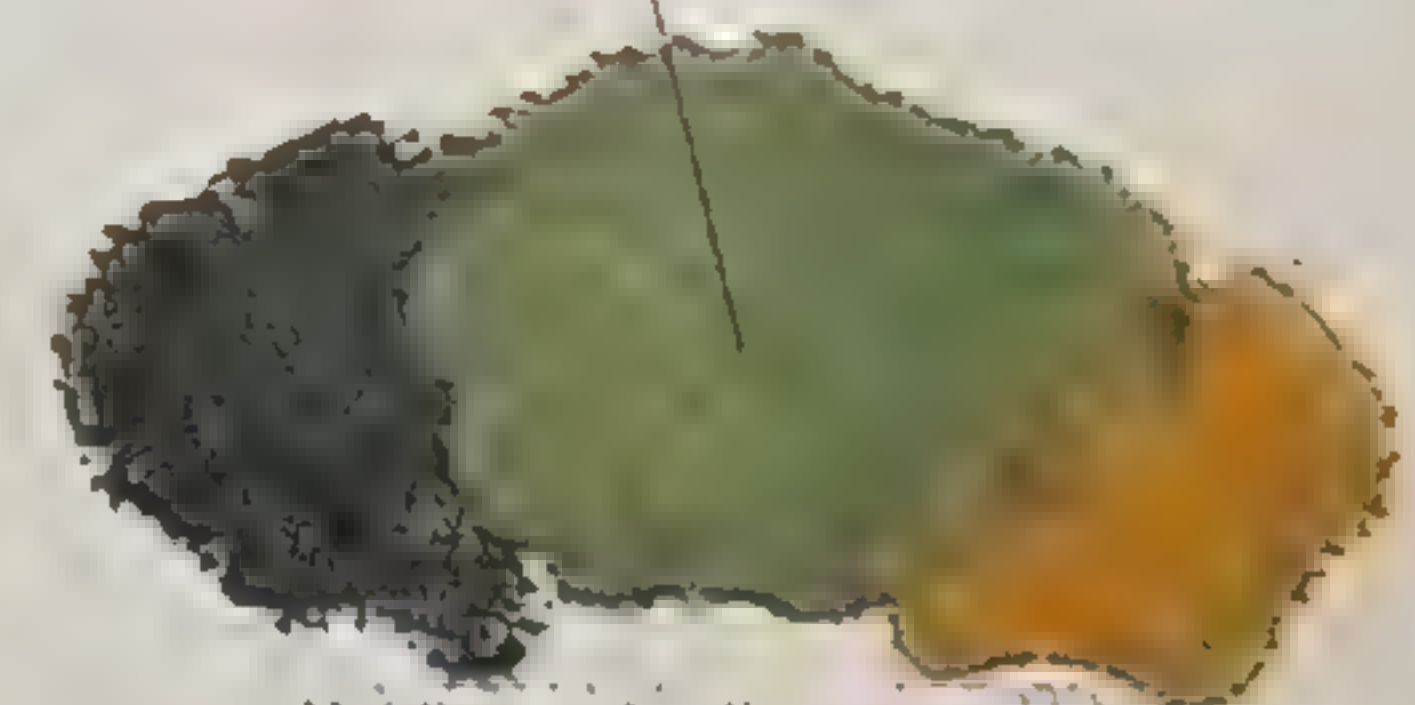


Stage 1

First we tone the canvas with a very thin, light wash of an earth color like yellow ochre or burnt umber and lots of turpentine. Rub this wash sparingly over the whole canvas with a rag. Covering the pure white canvas with this tone makes it easier to compare all values, lights as well as darks. When the tone dries — it doesn't take very long — we sketch in the lines of the still life, using a small brush and some umber paint. Then we begin to paint the main areas of color. We keep our rough color sketch in mind as we study our subject. We place the colors of the background, the bottle, drape and fruit next to each other so we can quickly see how each color relates to the others. Notice that, in contrast with the flat shapes in our rough color sketch, these first few colors suggest the form of the objects. The lights are warm, and the shadows cool.



Alizarin crimson and white



Viridian and yellow ochre

Stage 2

Here all of the canvas is covered or "laid in" — now we can compare colors even more accurately. See the definite differences in color between the light and shadow areas of the fruit, drape and tablecloth. Note that all parts of the picture are equally unfinished. Don't take time now to fill in detail or to finish up one section with great care, until you have compared all the colors in the picture with each other. If any hue doesn't seem right, this is the time to change it.



Cerulean blue, yellow ochre and white



Alizarin crimson and cadmium yellow



Alizarin crimson, cadmium red and white



Cadmium yellow and viridian



Stage 3

The finished picture is simply a refinement of the second stage. The forms are painted more carefully and necessary details, such as highlights and shadow accents, are added. Despite the variety of color we found as the picture developed, notice that we have maintained the basic color relationships of the preliminary rough color sketch. You can see this by squinting your eyes and comparing the two. Now paint a still life of your own.



Ultramarine blue and viridian



Alizarin crimson, cerulean blue and white



Cadmium yellow and cadmium red



Yellow ochre and cerulean blue



Faculty member Dong Kingman in his New York studio adds a finishing touch to his painting of Diamond Head.

DONG KINGMAN

shows you how to paint a watercolor

No matter where you are — in any section of the world — nature's color is waiting for your keen eye and paintbrush. Watercolor is a favorite of many artists who can best catch the spontaneity of their emotions and the freshness of a scene using this exciting medium. Dong Kingman, internationally known watercolorist and a member of your Faculty, has been working with watercolor continuously since 1931 and finds it more fascinating every day. "Although I can do almost anything with watercolor, I feel that controlling the medium is secondary. How you express yourself and what is behind your thoughts is far more important," says Kingman.

On these two pages, you can see the development of a watercolor that Kingman painted especially to show you the methods he uses so you can try them when you paint, adapting them to *your* subject. What first attracted him to this scene in Hawaii was the large, almost silhouette shape of Diamond Head Mountain against the early morning sky. Then as the sun rose higher he was intrigued by the way the light "opened up" this mass, breaking it into many smaller, interesting shapes of different colors he could use in his picture. Study the way this artist went to work, how he began with black-and-white sketches which evolved by stages into the colorful watercolor painting at the bottom of the next page.



Rough sketch

Kingman sketches and draws everywhere he goes. Some of these sketches become the inspiration for paintings he makes later in his studio. Before painting, he always makes preliminary drawings of his subjects to work out his composition and to decide on the pattern of lights and darks. This sketch, measuring approximately 5 by 7 inches, was drawn with pen and ink. The decisions made at this stage are most important. Kingman sometimes makes many such sketches until he is satisfied that the composition and light and dark pattern are just right.

Starting the watercolor

Keeping his preliminary drawing before him, Kingman referred to it often as he lightly sketched in the major areas and lines for the entire picture. Then, using a large brush, he painted some of the big important pieces of color. The mountain is the main area of interest to him, so he chose to paint it first. Note the variety of color he found — red, grays, browns, greens and yellows. Using the wet-in-wet technique, he painted the water an intense blue and then, with various grayed greens, he painted the trees.





Painting the sky

Above, the artist used a broad brush to wet the large sky area with clear water, leaving the areas dry where the white clouds would be. He was careful not to run the water over the edge of the mountain. Then into this wetness he painted the grays and blues, working across the paper from left to right. Kingman painted the sky after he had worked on the mountain because he wanted it to harmonize with and set off the colors of Diamond Head. After the sky was completed, the small accents of yellow and red were placed on the figures in the foreground.



This close-up shows Kingman's painting equipment just as he uses it every day — a casual, comfortable arrangement.

Finishing the painting

Finishing a watercolor painting takes a lot of thought to make sure that the final details don't destroy the freshness of the early stages. The sailboats, the people, the boats pulled up on the beach, the background buildings, the plants in the extreme foreground all give the painting a nice finish, but notice that Kingman kept these details simple and spontaneous looking.





Tom Allen



Norman Rockwell

Your studio

Someday you may have an imposing studio of your own, similar to one of those pictured here! Right now, you can make your own "studio corner" a pleasant place to paint in, no matter what small area of the house you've claimed for this purpose. You may want to keep some found objects or other favorite things nearby, or tack up pictures you like. On this page you can see the surroundings in which a few members of your Faculty work. Notice particularly that these artists keep their paints, brushes and other equipment convenient and in some order. You, too, should keep your materials handy, so whenever you feel like painting you can work in a well-arranged, comfortable setting.



Tom Allen's palette



Joseph Hirsch



Bob Peak

George Giusti

